# THE SCAFFOLD.

The Desperate Negro Murderer, Grant. Quieted at Last.

## A SPECIMEN ASSASSIN.

History of the Killing of Amanda Spence, His Aunt, at West Chester, Pa.

HIS FEROCITY IN PRISON.

Murderous Attacks by the Demoniacal Captive Upon the Keepers.

Hand-to-Hand Fight with Four Wardens.

AN INCOHERENT CONFESSION.

Fast Society, Fast Women and Hard Drinking His Ruin.

The Culprit Suffers the Last Penalty Without a Murmur.

WEST CHESTER, Pa., Nov. 13, 1872. ened from its wonted lethnigy by the report of a brutal assassination within its precincts. The report upon investigation proved to be true. Weltering in her blood lay Mrs. Amanda Spence, assassinated by one George Grant. Both parties were colored, the murdered woman having lived in the place since 1849 and was justly considered a respectable, inoffensive person. By industry and frugality herself and husband had gathered together enough oney to go into business for themselves. At the time of the murder they were keeping an oyster saloon and restaurant and making a very comfortable living. Grant, the murderer, was a barber and had married a niece of the Spences. After the marriage some difficulty arose between Mrs. Spence and Grant, which culminated in her death. THE PATAL SHOT

was fired about nine o'clock on the evening of the 5th of October, 1871. It is a very quiet time in suburban towns, and the report was heard by several persons, who ran to their doors to ascern the cause. Following the direction from which the report seemed to have come, the people found themselves at Spence's oyster saloon, next door to the Eagle Hotel on one side and adjoining the alley which leads into Parker's coal yard. The building fronts on Gay street, and is occupied as a barber shop, oyster saloon and residence. The pyster saloon is in the basement, and is reached by descending some five or six steps from the pavement, and the barber shop is on the first floor over the saloon. The room immediately in rear of the restaurant, and on the same floor, is used as a kitchen, and the balance of the building as a residence. The pavement is on a level with the saloon floor, and about three feet below the surface of the alley, from which it is divided by a close board fence, in which are two gates. In the rear of the building is a small piece of ground planted in cabbage, flowers and shrubbery. It was here the murder was committed. At the time of the murder a girl, twelve or fourteen years of age, was in the kitchen. She stated to the Coroner's jury during the investigation that her grandmother (Mrs. Spence) had just returned from visiting some neighbors and had gone into the yard to close the return to the house, and had just touched the doorlatch when the shot was fired, and the girl heard the saloon and told her grandfather that "somebody had hurt grandma." By this time some people had arrived on the premises and found Mrs. Spence lying on her back, her feet in the doorway and her head and body on the paved area. She was imme-

immediately expired. SEARCHING FOR THE MURDERER. The news spread with rapidity. Anxious in quiries were made as to who could be the murderer. Suspicion pointed to a man named Barrell, as he had a few weeks previously uttered threats against Mrs. Spence for compelling him to disgorge a ten barber shop. Barrell lived just outside of the town at Bowers' mill. Officers Bobb and Lynch took a carriage at once and proceeded to Barrell's house. They found him at home and arrested him. Before twelve o'clock he was lodged in the county jail. Previous to Barrell's arrest a search was made on the premises of the murdered woman for traces of the murderer. During the search an old musket was found under the shrubbery. The musket barrel had been cut off to within six or eight inches of the nipple. The stock had also been sawed off and whittled down, the design of the party who did it evidently being to make a horse pistol of it.

callco was found, which had been used as wadding. THE POST-MORTEM EXAMINATION revealed the fact that three balls had been shot

On the steps a partially burned and singed piece of

revealed the fact that three balls had been shot from the weapon into Mrs. Spence's back; one, a heavy slug, was sticking in the skin under her left breast; the other two (buckshot) had passed through the heart and lungs. In the course of the examination the pistol was produced, but no one recognized it. George Grant, the murderer, saw it, but "knew nothing of it or who it belonged to!" Grant remained in the house all night and assisted in various ways. He helped carry the body up stairs. He also went to a livery stable and got a horse and carriage for Mr. Spence to drive to Philadelphia to notify the police, and in the morning assisted in getting breakfast!

THE OWNERSHIP OF THE PISTOL

was traced to Grant, and he was arrested. He admitted having owned it, but said he had lost it several weeks since, while shooting crows in a field near the town. When shown the pistol the previous evening he denied having ever seen it before. His stories being so contradictory he was locked up. Witnesses were found who remembered he had borrowed a ramrod with a screw in it to clean the pistol; that he loaded it with sing and shot, the same as found in the body of the murdered woman; and the calico wadding found on the doorstep corresponded with some found in a bureau drawer in Grant's house. His reputation was not altogether unsuified, he having spent two or three terms in prison; and taking all the facts into consideration it was determined to hold him for trial. Barreli was believed to be an accomplice. The trial quickly followed, and ended in Grant's conviction of murder of the first degree. The evidence against him was very strong, numerons witnesses having sworn to seeing the pistol in his possession on the night of the murder, the evidence of Rebecca Price, on being sworn, deposed as fol-

lamaging.

CONCLUSIVE TESTIMONY OF GUILT.

Rebecca Price, on being sworn, deposed as fol-Rebecca Price, on being sworn, deposed as follows:—

I saw Grant on the night of the murder about eight o'clock; I fix the time by the departure of the seven o'clock train; It was about three-quariers of an hour after the train had left that he came to my house; he was there from ten to fifteen minutes; he asked my son for a penkulie; he replied that he had none; forant reached in the cupboard, took a case-knife, went to the bureau and commenced scraping something; my daughter asked him what he was doing; he said. "None of your busines," and that he could attend to his own business; he had a large pistol in his hand; he reached his hand back under his coat; his back was toward me; when he turned towards me he had a handkerchief in his hand; he asked me for a pin; I could not see what he was doing; he appeared to be tearing something tougher than paper; I noticed powder on the bureau cover after he left; there was no such mark there before; Grant int a cigar and went out; I soon heard the report of a pistol; about fitteen or twenty minutes after I he ard the report Grant came to my door and said to my son you lice or are a hinr; he sat at the steps with the girs for about five minutes.

Eliza Dennils sworn—Saw Grant on the evening of the morder; he was going in the direction of Enos cyster saicon, where his wife works; he passed me on church at ect; I was on my way to Curtis Smith's store; just as he passed me he said to himself; "The d—d black b—h, I will match her be ore sunrise;" I heard him grit his teeth as he uttered these words. \* \* He said the d—d old b—h was trying to put mischler into his wife's passed; that he had watched for her one night to kill her

The first suspicious circumstance than arose came from a request from Grant to his keeper for a quarter of a pound of snuff, as he wanted to preserve his olothes from the moth! This was, in popular parliance, altogether "too thin," and Mr. Haines, his older of the cells on the third tier. On Wednesday alternoon Rev. Joseph Evans visited Grant in his cell, and labored with him for his spiritsaul welfare, but came away discouraged. Control of the cells with the control of the cells of the cell of the cells of the cells of the cells of the cells of the cell of th the form of strong drink, and in the form of bad company, and in the form of ill-tome women and accent many other evil temptations, will rob the accent of just rights in law and selected of the strong of just rights in law and selected of the strong of just rights in law and selected of the strong of just rights in law and selected of the strong of t

inture. When I arrived at West Chester yesterday and called on the Sheriff he told me they proposed to

IRON THE PRISONER
in the afternoon. It was feared there would be trouble, and sheriff Gill had made every preparation to secure the fellow. I went to the jail about half-past one. There were present one of the Jail Commissioners, the Sheriff, three or four keepers and two outsiders, brought in for the occasion, to help in case of a disposition on Grant's part to show fight. Sheriff Gill put a six-shooter in his coat pocket, another man carried a wrench, another a maliet, a keeper bore the handcuffs and "ankiets" and I carried my pencil and note book. Grant was in a cell on the upper tier. The party went up, and the Sheriff opened the door. A man passed in, quickly followed by a second and a third and a fourth. Grant was taken completely by surprise. When he was informed of the nature of the visit he said he would not walk down after being ironed. As it was the intention of the Sheriff to take him down stairs finally this request was acceded to, and the party, with Grant in charge, returned to the lower or ground tier of cells. Grant was conducted to a cell on the righthand side, and the keepers and the Sheriff followed. Then began a series of imprecations and crying and fault-finding. Every one present was accused of

"You would kill me now if you could, and you all know I am innocent, so you do," he continued, in the intervals between his tears and imprecations. There was some dimently in finding a pair of handcuffs to suit, as it was found the others had been broken when the party entered the upper cell.

Grant told us he broke them on the iron edge of the sink in the cell. Finally the manacles were adjusted and the handcuffs securely fixed and sprung, and we retired. The Jail Commissioner asked me up to look at

justed and the handcuffs securely fixed and sprung, and we retired. The Jail Commissioner asked me up to look at

GRANT'S FORMER CELL,
and such a sight! The wall was covered with blood from Mr. Haines' wounds, the bedding and straw scattered about the hoor, two hoies dug into the wall above the door where the desperado had hoped to make his escape since last Wednesday. Some one found a billy, recently made, which I found by its weight to consist of something besides lead. I cut it open and found it was made of two pieces of file, a lot of green worsted wrapped around these pieces, and the whole wrapped with cord. It had a leather cover, and would have been a formidable weapon in a strong man's hand. Grant had a valise, which was brought down stairs. In the valise were found a number of small steel saws. When I left the jail Grant was with his spiritual adviser. The Sheriff sent him some oyster soup, but he found fault with it. He wanted it put into a tin pan. Then he wanted the Deputy Sheriff to leave; but that officer replied that it must be eaten while he was present. Grant got up and took the soup to a corner of the cell and threw it on the floor; then, turning to the Deputy, said, "You come in here thinking to make me mind. I could, with all my irons on, hold you till you squirmed." The Deputy had no further business in that cell.

When evening shadows began to gather, and the howilns of the wind and flying leaves made the traveller in the streets hasten home, the desperate wretch, whose span of life on earth was assuredly so short, looked through his harrow window at the blank prison wall without and cursed in his heart the causes that had deprived hun of his liberty and would soon deprive him of his life. "Oh! it seems very hard on me to call those outrageous thoughts to my mind, even to write them. Second, disreputable company foolishly was my choice, and also that destructible companion who answers to the name of strong drink. Third, women of ill-fame," he had written in his "con-

tession," as the people here term it. How much of agony is developed in the recollections and the remorae attending the life he has evidenty led! Remorae was keen, even in the mind of this poor, agony is developed in the recollections and the remorse attending the life he has evidently led! Remorse was keen, even in the mind of this poor, ignorant, brutal murderer. His uncouth manner of conveying his sentiments detracts not a whit from the moral conveyed, and if one life is saved by reading-the record of this tragedy the mission of the journalist, to report its close, will not have been in vain. The keepers went their accustomed rounds and reported all well. No sound broke the silence save the suppressed whisperings and stiffed sobs in the cell of the condemned. A minister of the Gospel was with the unhappy man, and one might fancy at times that his appeats to Grant were being met with a responsive tremor of that giant frame; but his mind wandered from the great mystery of the hereafter, his whole anxiety, his uppermost thought being to gain an advantage over his keepers. But this could not be. The last turn of the rivet on his manacles, the final "clock" to the closing handening destroyed the last faint chance of escape. Hope had fied; yet he hoped. But at times he felt the full strength of his position, and hope was superseded by fell despair. As the shadows of evening lengthened the Sheriff advanced noiselessly down the corridor and looked around him. Everything was secure; but it was deemed best to make assurance doubly sure. Two lights were brought into the corridor and fixed on each side of Grant's door; the outer door, which is of iron and grated, tightly closed and secured. The first two of the six men detailed to guard the prisoner were brought in and began their watch of six hours, to be in turn relieved by two others, and so on till morning.

IREPARING POR DEATH.

At nine o'clock Grant thought he would like to have some mince pie. It was given him. He ate a whole pie, and then asked for water. He slept soundly all night, and awoke in the morning, feeling well. At soven o'clock he ate a hearty breakfast. His religious adviser came in early, and began a conversation with the prisoner about the

to the removal of his manacles. His arms were then pinioned and his hands tied in front.

THE PROCESSION.

Consisting of the Sheriff and deputies and the Sheriff's jury, then began the march to the scaffold. As the procession emerged from the prison to the yard a number of negroes were seen perched on the roof of a house hard by, morbidly interested spectators of the tragedy within the prison walls. Owing to the precautions of the authorities they could see very little, as the scaffold was erected directly under the agie of the prison wall.

Was very simple in construction, consisting of two upright posts, twelve feet high, with a crossbeam from the top of each. Seven steps led up to the platform, which was made like a table, with the leaf falling inward. Arrived on the scaffold, Rev. Joseph Evans offered a short prayer in the prisoner's behalf, Grant's lips murmuring an inaudible response the while. The Sheriff, Gill, at the conclusion of the prayer, preduced some cord, with which he tied Grant's ankles. Having performed this duty the minister bade Grant farewell, then the Sheriff shook hands and whispered a word of hope to the trembling wretch. The Deputy Sheriff gave Grant a farewell pressure of the hand, the black cap was adjusted, a signal given, the rope was quickly pulled, the trap fell to the brick pavement, and the body of George Grant swung in mid air. The rope was not very tightly adjusted, and the knot slipped around to the back of his neck. Death was not instantaneous, but was induced by strangulation. The blody had hung twenty-three minutes. There is a general feeling of relief among the people here now that the execution has taken place, for Grant was very reasonably feared, and especially by the colored people in this borough.

#### BOARD OF COUNTY CANVASSERS.

The Board of County Canvassers assembled last evening in the chamber of the Board of Supervisors, Daniel E. Conover presiding. After the adoption of several unimportant resolutions it was discovered that a deadlock was placed on the proceedings of the Board, inasmuch as the returns from several election districts were incomplete.

General Cochrane addressed those present. He argued that there were a great many obstacles in the way of commencing the canvass of the returns in consequence of the irregularities on the part of the inspectors and poll clerks, who have in many instances failed to comply with the law, which clearly stated that the inspectors and poll clerks of each district should sign their names across the envelopes containing the returns, in order to avoid transferring, and cited the following section of the Election law:—'The said inspectors shall make triplicate statements of the result of the statements shall be and estimate of the votes. Each of the statements shall contain a caption stating the day on which and the number of the election district and the city and county in relation to which such statement shall be made, and the time of opening and closing the polis of such election district. It shall also contain a statement showing the whole number of votes given for each person, designating the office for which they were given, which statement shall be written or partly written and partly printed, in words at length, and at the end thereof a certificate and each sheet of paper forming part of the statement shall be subscribed by the said inspectors and poil clerks. If any inspector or poil clerk shall decline to sign any return he shall state his reasons. der to avoid transferring, and cited the following and poll cierks. If any inspector or poll cierk shall decline to sign any return he shall state his reasons therefor in writing, and a copy thereof, signed by him, shall be enclosed with each return. Each of the statements shall be enclosed in a envelope, which shall then be securely sealed with wax and each of the inspectors and each of the poll cierks shall write his name across every fold at which the envelope, if unfastened, could be opened, and across the seals thereon. One of the envelopes shall be directed on the outside to the cierk of the Board of Supervisors; another to the County Clerk, and the third to the Chief of the Bureau of Elections. Each set of tallies shall also be enclosed, securely sealed and signed in like manner, and one of the envelopes shall be directed on the outside to the Chief of the Bureau of Elections and the other to the Mayor. On the outside of every envelope shall be endorsed whether it contains the statement or the tallies, and for what election and Assembly district." In his mind it was clear that the attendance of the inspectors and the poll cierks was indispensable, but meanwhile he proposed that they should proceed with the canvass. That it was necessary to have legal advice he admitted, and he trusted that the services of the legal adviser of the Board of Supervisors would be called into requisition, in order to make the proceedings of the Board legal.

egal.
The Chairman then stated that the First Assem-

tion, in order to make the proceedings of the Board legal.

The Chairman then stated that the First Assembly district, in consequence of there being only five signatures, should by law be ruled out. The Second did not contain a single district the returns of which were properly made out.

Supervisor Vance was of opinion that notwithstanding the irregularities in question, the Board onght to proceed with the canvass.

Mayor Hall then addressed those present. He referred to a resolution already proposed by him and said:—If the Board can question the authenticity of one district he would lige to know why it could not question all, and cited legal authorities in support of his argument. It was, he said, incumbent on the members of the Board to guard, as much as possible, against any tampering with the election returns, and he, as a lawyer, knew they had it in their power to remedy the defect, and at all events, as a matter of policy, it was wrong to say that the guarantee should be dispensed with. He felt certain that, unless some steps were taken now to put a final stop to all tampering, the inspectors and poll clerks at the next election would entirely neglect their business. In one of the Assembly districts he had heard it stated that a m. wher claimed there was something wrong, inasmuch as his opponent had been elected by only one of a majority, while there was no doubt the election of Aldermen would be very closely contested, and unless the law was strictly compiled with he, as a lawyer, would be very glad to contest the legality of any member returned. He therefore thought, in juncessing his views on the Board, he was but discharging a public duty, and he earnestly hoped they would do nothing outside of the strict letter of the law, for the omission of the inspectors and poll clerks furnishes a more than sufficient question of law.

Several members addressed the meeting, advocating the sentiments of Mayor Hall, and ultimately a resolution was adopted that a committee of Aldermen and the Secretary of the Board

Something Gone Wrong.

Considerable excitement was caused at Police Headquarters yesterday afternoon by the announcement of the reception of a despatch from the County Canvassers, ordering all the poll-clerks the County Canvassers, ordering all the poll-clerks and inspectors of the First, Second and Third Assembly districts to appear before those gentlemen. About three hundred persons had to be notified of of the desire of the canvassers to interview them, and it was evident from the looks of some of them, as they hurried to Headquarters to find out what was the matter, that something had really gone wrong. Whether the election officers were acquainted with the danger in which they stood or not could not be ascertained; but the public will, no doubt, be duly informed of the cause and meaning of the thundering despatch.

## MANSARD ROOFS.

The Danger to Which New York Is Exposed by Their Faulty Construction-Where the Defects Lie and the Remedy-The Mansard the Main Cause of the Confisgration in Boston-The System Must Be Either Modified or Abolished.

than a year has visited two of the most dourishing cities of the American Continent and the terrific rapidity with which they were destroyed by the dread element of fire naturally calls attention to the causes which contributed to bring about two to imagine that they could occur if everyth the construction and government of the cities was right, and the question comes significantly to us:-Is our own city liable to be overtaken with a calamity similar to those which have overtaken Boston and Chicago, and if so, what steps can be taken to prevent it. The difference in the construction of the three cities is not great enough to war ant the conclusion that New York is safe from sudden danger, and in some respects it is more exposed to it than either of its sister cities. That the two greatest confiagrations which the world has witnessed in 200 years should have occurred in this country within so short intervals from each other is a startling fact, and from present appearances we may expect one or two similar visitations in every de-When the spectacle of powerless fire departments and devastating tornadoes of flame is witnessed around us in such rapid succession New York may well tremble for its safety, and should devise means to render utterly impossible any blow to its onward march in trade, commerce and civilization. An extended conflagration in New York would be the decisive overthrow of

for our city is the Empire City of the Union, and the downfail of its interests would be the common loss of the American people,
Among the causes which have contributed to the loss of the American people.

Among the causes which have contributed to the fires in Boston and Chicago, the one most frequently heard of and emphasically dwelt upon by experienced builders is the rapid growth in the two cities within the past five years of buildings with Mansard roofs. The experience of every city in the Union teaching the fact that however beautiful such buildings may be in architectural effects, and however conductive they are to convenience, room and comiort, they contain grave detects which can only be remedied by the total abolition of the Mansard or a greatly improved method in its construction. Almost every editice that is now being erected is not considered sale without the addition of one of those roofs—stores, dwellings, hoteis, manufactories, asylums, hospitals and other edifices devoted to public purposes. On most of these the Mansards, in conformity with a spirit of islae economy and an estentations desire for display,

ARE CONSTRUCTED ENTRIELY OF WOOD, with a thin covering of slate on the outside, fastened to wood, leaving the upper portion of the building, in case of a sudden configuration, entirely unprotected.

Alier the Childago fire a select committee was

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After the Chicago fire a select committee was
appointed by the Board of Underwriters to examline into the whole system of French or Mansard
roofs, and from the published result of the investigation an idea can be had of the estimation in
which such roofs are held by insurance men. The
entire system as it now prevails is denounced in
unmeasured terms, and its modification or overthrow demanded as the only safeguard against
sudden fire in all great commercial and
manufacturing centres. Mansard roofs are
of French origin, but the style in which
they are constructed here differs entirely from that
of Paris. In Paris it is in all cases required that
the walls should extend above the horizontal and
also the slope of the roof, and they are never under
any circumstances to be allowed to be uncoped.
Wood is not permitted to be used except in the
main planking, and everything that would have a
tendency to attract or feed fire is
CAREPULLY GUARDED AGAINST.

It has been stated by some that such coping
tends to destroy the architectural beauty of the
edifice, but this theory can be entirely reluted by
the examination of such structures as the
National Park Bank, the Equitable Life Assurance Company, the Herald building, and
others, which are perfect models of strength,
symmetry and beauty. The roofs of all these
buildings are entirely constructed of stone and
iron. No woodwork is used, and even the plastering is upon iron lathing. The same can be said of
very few of the apparently magnificent edifices
which adorn Broadway, which, however pleasing
in their exterior and graceful in their appearance,
are utterly unable to offer any opposition to a
strong fire when it comes upon them. It is an absurdity at the outset to first erect buildings of
great height—six or seven stories—make the lower
part fireproof and then put a tinderbox on the top
to ridi

inated in a building with a Man originated in a building with a Mansard roof, was fed by Mansard roofs, and only checked when it reached a district in which there were no Mansard roofs to burn. The number of these roofs in Beston was extremely large, and they have found favor in almost every city of the Union— in New York, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Newark, Hartford, Chicago and other large places.

arge places.
In none of those cities can the roofs be called In none of those cities can the roots be called safe, and they offer no protection against fire; and in Franklin and Devonshire streets, in Boston, they extended whole blocks without any visible break. In White street, in this city, much valuable prop-erty is similarly exposed, and the Board of Under-writers have several times called attention to the insecurity of the buildings in certain parts of the streets.

insecurity of the buildings in certain parts of the streets.

The report of the committee mentioned before winds up by saying that the only safety of the city of New York lies in a radical reformation of the law relating to this important part of buildings. It states that it has been sufficiently demonstrated that there is no necessity why those handsome additions to

It states that it has been sufficiently demonstrated that there is no necessity why those handsome additions to

THE CITY ARCHITECTURE

should be lost if certain conditions are observed, and the committee end their report with the foilowing suggestions:—

Where Mansard roofs are placed on dwellings where the roof is not over ten feet in height the casings, frames, ratters and sheathing may be of wood, provided, in all cases, the coping on the face of the roof is not less than twelve inches in depth, but in all cases division walls must be carried through the roof and coped in the usual way. On all other buildings the casings, frames, ratters and backing of the Mansard roofs must be of iron or other heavy metal; copings to all walls to extend through the roof at least twelve inches. Alterations—Where one or more buildings are altered hereafter to be covered under one roof, the dividing walls of the same shall be carried through the roof, and coped at least twelve inches on the top, as well as on the face at every fitty feet.

Mr. McGregor, the Superintendent of the Public Building Department, furnished some interesting particulars in relation to fire-proof buildings, referring particularly to the Mansard. He shares in the opinion of Captain Damrell, the Chief Engineer of the Fire Department in Boston, that Mansard roofs contributed to the spread of the fire, but the great danger in his opinion lies in the party-walls, which are not constructed of sufficient strength to withstand the flames. The following extract in reference to the roof is taken from his published report of 1869:—

In this connection I deem it necessary to refer more particularly to the manner of constructing "Mansard" or French roofs, a style of roof with which a number of our largest and most lofty hotels, banks and other public buildings, which have been erected within the past few years, are surmounted. Many of these structures tower to the some la case of fire poof materials, as well as the corniers and coverings thereof.

HON SHUTTERS.

Mr

coverings thereof.

IRON SHUTTERS,

Mr. Macgregor alluded to many buildings he considered unsafe, speaking particularly of those on Church street, which, not being provided with iron shutters, are liable to danger at any moment; and he is of opinion that if ever a fire breaks out on an extended scale in this vicinity the city will be decimated from Canal street to the Battery and from river to river.

#### THE BOSTON PIRE-A CORRECTION. TO THE EDITOR OF THE HEBALD:-

In your interesting Boston letter relative to the great fire, printed in this morning's HERALD, ap-

great fire, printed in this morning's Herald, appears this passage:—

Passing the stalwart policeman who kept back the crowd at the top of Franklin street I entered the burned district. Here on the right stood the Pilot building, owned by Patrick Donahoe, who began life a poor, unlettered trish boy, and whoby untiring industry and perseverance became a millionnaire, owning one of the finest structures in the city. He did not make a cent of his money by selling rum to his countrymen, as many have done, his loss cannot be thoroughly estimated. He bears his misfortune like thousands of other heavy losers, with was naturally enough his pride. He was at a press dinner on Saurday at the Revere House while his building was being laid in ashes.

Powmit me to say that Mr. Donahoe, of the Pilot.

Permit me to say that Mr. Donahoe, of the Pilot. did not begin life a "poor, unlettered Irish boy," as he had been given by his parents a good English education, and had been by them early appren-ticed to the "art preservative" of all arts," by pa-

tient, intelligent and laborious devotion to whice pursuit, through all his active years he has wen for himself the eminently honorable position in commercial and professional life which he has so creditably filled in Boston for the average of a generation. He has met with a great misfortune in the loss of the superb building, which, in worldly sense, was the pride of his business life. But the loss will not discourage or dishearten him. He will presently, with ample means, resume active operations, and by his resolute will and indomitable pluck and energy he will (keaven favoring him) very speedily regain all that he has lost of substantial strength and mercantile success. Further, allow me to call your attention to the fact that the Pilot building, according to the published accounts, was not destroyed until past midnight on Saturday, and Mr. Donaboe was not at such an hour at a dinner at the Revere or any other house.

#### POLAR EXPEDITIONS AND ARCTIC EXPLORATIONS.

The Northwest Passage was discovered by Englishmen. In 1850 McClure and Collinson sailed through Behring Straits and steered due east towards Melvitle Sound. There, locked in the loc, they were picked up by Belcher, who had made his way up into the Sound through Greenland Gulf and Bailin's Lay. Thus, then, McClure and his company are the only navigators who have ever accomplished the problem of the Hole of the Sound of the Mikado. Great as the discovery is, it yet is useless. We have cut Suez; we may soon perform a similar exploit at Pansana. The Central Pacific line binds San Francisco to New York; and before another generation has passed away a continuous road will stretch from Table Bay to the Mozambique Channel. But another problem awaits us, more important by iar and more interesting than the discovery of either Northwest or Northcast Channel. We know that North America, with its huge pendant of the Southern Continent; that Asia and Europe, and—to add yet another continent—Greenland, are but enormous Islands; tha Behring Straits, the Gulf of Greenland and the open sea between Spitzbergen and Mova Zembla are all in Iree communication with one another some straits, the Gulf of Greenland and the continents? The general theory, and one which incits strongly support, is that fowards the North Pole sets a continuous undercurrent of warm sea water, which, rising at the Pole itself, forms a huge iree Argule Sea, surrounded by monstrous leebergs and infinite floes, while itself is unrunified by winds, untroubled by tempest, teeming with life and ever open. From its centre the currents set southward, and soon the chill brine is converted into huge masses of ice, which, floating towards the Gulf Sea, the Pole itself, forms a huge iree Argule Sea, converted into huge and hideous blocks and himself, as it were, now as surely as well and the continents. The general theory is converted into hu

next Spring to follow up the researches already described.

Where is England amid all these expeditions? Ought she not, too, to hold her own? Where so great a problem is to be solved, ought she alone to hold back and to measure the net value of the results of such an undertaking against its net cost? Grant that the discovery of the open Polar Sea will lead to no real good, will add not a penny either to our imports or our exports; that the wretched savages who live on the extreme northern fringe of the world's two huge continents have nothing to offer us for our beads and cuttery save sealskins and walrus ivory, and that, on our part, it is cheaper to procure ivory from Central Africa and sealskins from Alaska than to despatch vessels to the terrible Northern Sea. Even when all this is admitted, the broad question yet remains behind of our national glory and credit. Is England to once again allow herself to be outstripped in the race? While we were debating about Livingstone and Northern Sea. Even when all this is admitted, the broad question yet remains behind of our national glory and credit. Is Engiand to once again allow herself to be outstripped in the race? While we were debating about Livingstone and about the possibilities of passing through Unyanyembe to Uliji Mr. Stanley was already on his way. By the time the English expedition had collected its forces at Zanzibar the young American was pressing on from Uliji to the coast, bearing the news for which we had waited for years. Is such a defeat to happen again to the England of Drake and Frobisher, of Hudson and Baffin, of Ross and Parry, of McClure and Beicher, of Franklin and Usborn? Surely the glory of discovering this open Northern Sea ought to be our own. Doubtless the matter is not one in which an economical Chancellor can be expected to take any great interest. Mr. Lowe would probably reply, as he replied when asked to aid the Livingstone Search Expedition, that the case is one eminently suited for private enterprise, and to which, so long as it is supported by private funds, all success and prosperity may be wished. But is this the way in which a great country such as our own—the queen of the ocean, the mistress of the seas—ought to measure her duties? In old days kings and emperors nad wider and broader views. The records of the Hackluyt Society teem with narrative after narrative of expeditions sent out at the expense of the national exchequer. The outlay of money that such undertakings involve is a mere bagatelie. The results in which they may end, and often do end, are incalculable. The discoveries of Livingstone and Stanley suggest to us a possibility of a great line of rail running due east and west from Congo to Comoro, and rendering unnecessary the tedious passage round the Cape. So, too, it would seem that the Nicaragua Canai ought to have been discovered years ago; that, in short, it is the fault of our governments that we know so little as we do of the earth's surface. "I believe," says Socrates to his pupils

#### THE LADIES' PAIR OF ST. LAWRENCE CHURCH, YORKVILLE.

The ladies' fair on Eighty-fourth street, between Third and Fourth avenues, which has already had a run of over three weeks, will be continued for another week in the school house attached to the another week in the school house attached to the Church of St. Lawrence. The object of the fair is to raise funds for the erection of a new church, which, when finished, will not alone give ample accommodation to the Catholies of Yorkville, but will also contribute, in an architectural way, to the adornment of that portion of the city. There are many things of interest in the fair. Notwithstanding its somewhat out-of-the-way location it finds its share of patrons and is nightly increasing in popularity. In the forthcoming week it is hoped a still better patronage will be extended to it and the means secured to accomplish the purpose for which the fair was started. Father Goecken, the pastor, invites all the graduates of St. John's College to visit the fair and contribute to the object.

# FIRE IN HENRY STREET.

A fire broke out yesterday afternoon on the first floor of the dweiling 112 Henry street that caused a damage of \$200. One of the rear rooms was also damaged to the extent of \$300. Samuel Goldman, who occupied the front room, was insured in the Hamilton Company for \$500. Thomas Coleman, the inhabitant of the rear chamber, was not insured. Fire Marshal McSpeden will hold an investigation into the cause of the conflagration to-day.

### THE INSURANCE COMPANIES.

Collapse of the Market, of New York-A Feeting of Insecurity Prevalent and Fears for the Stability of Three or Four More Companies-A Legal Squabble for the Receivership of the International-Suspension of More Out of Town Companies-The Hoffman Perfectly Solvent.

The suspension of the Humboldt and Interna-

tional Fire Insurance Companies caused much concern yesterday for the stability of others, who

make no better showing in their published state

ments, and canards were started at every corne

of the streets intersecting lower Broadway, ab other companies being on the eve of go bankruptcy. The International, at the head of which is Mr. Savage, one of the most cautious e presidents in the city, was generally believed to be solvent and in a flourishing condition, yet it suc-cumbed to the astonishment of everybody, and asked for a receiver. An examination of the state ments put forth by several other companies shows that they are apparently no better than the International, yet they still stand the pressure. In vesterday's HERALD the condition of all the city companies, with one exception, appeared in voluminous compilation made from the efficers statements, and vesterday it was subjected to much criticism. Many officials, while declaring that their own losses were correctly put, declared that rival companies had understated their losses by from forty to sixty per cent. Mr. Hodges, of the Hoffman, was one of these gentlemen, and he as-signed as his reason for not before giving his losses to the press that he knew some other companies were placing their loss at one-half of what they actually sustained, and did not wish to misrepresent as they had done. The report that his company is in a critical condi-tion he most emphatically denied; he placed their loss by the Boston fire at \$100,000, and as: reporter that they can pay it and have a good sur plus to continue business. He felt very much aggrieved at the reported suspension of the Hoff-man and declares that, if it is necessary, the offcers will make up any deficiency, even if it be he has not sooner placed the facts as to their condition before the public and thus set at rest condition before the public and thus set at rest the rumored suspension. It is a matter of regret that the rumor gained circulation, but the directors can blame no one but their President for his obstinacy. In the face of apparently well-founded rumor and the absence of any statement of its condition or any denial of the rumor, the press could not be expected to declare the company solvent, and Mr. Hodges has doubtless discovered at last that the better way to set at rest misrepresentations is to candidly point to the figures which show such a gratifying exhibit for this old and popular company. When asked if other suspensions were likely to occur, prominent insurance men yesterday gravely shook their heads and responded that they had well-grounded fears for the ability of three or four other companies to weather the danger that threatens. A great deal depends upon the liberaity of the stockholders. This was shown immediately after the chicago fire, where many companies, at first and for many days after supposed to be solvent, went down and were forced out of business. It was supposed by the directors of these companies that the stockholders would at once come forward and make up the impairment by subscription; but many falled, and their companies were driven to the alternative of going into bankruptcy. Such, it is feared, will be the case now with three or four companies who are badly sporthed financially by the Boston catastrophe. If the stockholders come to the aid of their institutions with subscriptions to make up the loss they will doubtless be able to continue fire underwriting and pay all losses in full. If not, serious embarrassment, if not bankruptcy, must result. Where the surplus is wiped out by the losses, and the capital is so much impaired that they have not enough to cover reinsurances, companies must either make good the loss or go under. After such losses as some companies nave sustained at Boston the stockholders can but protect themselves by temporary suspension, and it is probable a few wil the rumored suspension. It is a

The Bay State, of Worcester, Mass., has succumbed to the pressure and suspended. It lost \$250,000; and as it had on 1st January \$333,662 assets it will likely pay in full.

The Meriden, Conn., Insurance Company loses only \$30,000.

The Home, of Columbus, Ohio, loses only \$47,500. The Equitable Insurance Company, of Providence, R. I., has stopped taking risks and called a meeting of its stockholders. The total risks of the company in the Boston burned district are \$317,000, and the total assets \$430,000.

The only failure reported yesterday among New York companies is the Market, located at 37 Wall street. On Tuesday the officers declared their ability to go through; but yesterday morning at an informal meeting of the directors they suspended, and a meeting of the stockholders will be held today to decide upon what course to pursue in settling up the company's affairs. One of the officers, who was applied to for the assets and liabilities, stated that they would not be made public until after to-day's meeting. This company has been exceedingly unfortunate, having suspended twice before—after the Troy and Chicago fires. It is believed that it will be in a position to pay a large percentage on its losses, and perhaps in full. The hitch in the appointment of a receiver for the International is explained in the Brooklyn papers of last evening. It appears that on Monday last Mr. Henry M. Bixby, one of the stockholders of the company, and appointing a receiver, on account of its heavy losses by the Boston fire. Judge Pratt granted a temporary injunction against the company, and appointing a receiver, on account of its heavy losses by the Boston fire. Jurige Pratt granted a temporary injunction against the company, and appointing a receiver, on herodockholders in the Application of other stockholders, appointed Mr. Jarvis Siade permanent receiver of the company, Judge Fancher not being aware of the prior proceedings had been given to the company, Judge Fancher not being aware of the prior proceeding before Judge Pratt.

and that Judge Frait should now make an order appointing Mr. Cammerden or somebody else permanent receiver.

Mr. Scudder, on the other hand, claimed that the order by Judge Fancher appointing Mr. Stade as receiver was vaild and ended the proceedings. He said that the stockholders almost unaninously proved of Mr. Stade's appointment, and that three-louring of the Boston creditors would also support the stellment of the sold or creditors would also support the stellment of the afairs of a should have a voice in the settlement of the afairs of a sompany having a million doilars of assets.

Mr. Bergen urged that Mr. Stade was recommended by the directors of an insolvent insulance company; that he himself was one of the directors and one of the diamete committee, under whose management the company had become insolvent. Mr. Cammerden was ready to daynish bonds to the extent of \$10,000,000 if the Court required it. Mr. Bergen went on to say that they claimed there was no such Judge as Judge Francher. It was a very grave question whether his appointment to the suppose of the court bench by the Governor was legal, and the Governor's power was vary much doubted by the Bar. Judge Frait—Do you raise that question.

Mr. Bergen—We do; but all cents, whether there is or is not such a Judge, his order is illegal, because there was a receiver previously appointed by Your Mr. Scudder—Do you claim that the company was insolvent previous to the Boston fire?

Mr. Scudder—Do you claim that the company was insolvent previous to the Boston fire?

Mr. Scudder—Then the argument about the responsibility of the directors for its insolvency does not apply. Judge Frait took the papers and reserved decision.

A meeting of the directors of the New York and Yonkers was held yesterday, when it was unanimously resolved to assess for the losses at Boston and go on insuring as usual, without lessening their capital or assets a dollar. Such promptness on the part of the directors of all the companies would restore confidence in them.

# FELL DOWN STAIRS.

Thomas Donnelly fell down stairs at 323 East Twenty-seventh street and died in Bellevue from the effects of the injuries received. The accident occurred on the 4th inst. Coroner Schirmer will hold an inquest on the body.